

China 17 Feb

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL**

Country: Republic of the China

Project Title: First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity

Country Eligibility: Ratified the CBD on 5 January 1993

GEF Financing Requested: US\$ 59,400

Government Contribution: In-kind and personnel

Estimated Total Budget: US\$ 59,400

GEF Implementing Agency: UNEP

National Executing Agency: National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)

GEF Operational Focal Point: Ministry of Finance, World Bank Department

CBD Focal Point: NEPA

Estimated Starting Date: March 1997

Project Duration: 6 months

I. Background/Context

The People's Republic of China is one of the countries with the richest biological diversity on earth. Its large area (9.6 million sq.km) with a great variety of climates, a complex topography and a diversity of geographical conditions have resulted in the physical and biological diversity encountered in only a few countries around the world.

China is one of the twelve "megadiversity" countries of the world (McNeely *et al.* 1990)¹, ranking eighth in the world and first in the northern hemisphere. More than 32800 species of higher plants (third rank after Brazil and Colombia), 2600 species of fern (80% of the world's total) and 6374 species of vertebrates (13.9% of the world's total) are found in the country. Endemism is very high and in some parts of the country, well over 20% of some animal and plant species are endemic. China is also one of the world's three largest centres of origin for cultivated plants. The number of wild relatives of various plants of economic importance found in the country is considerable. For example, almost all of the wild species and wild relatives of forages can be found in China. Up to now, more than 11000 species of medicinal plants have been discovered in the country.

There is also a large diversity of natural ecosystems distributed in China. Representatives of most of the major terrestrial ecosystem types on earth (forests, shrublands, steppes, meadows, deserts, savanna, alpine, tundra) can be found here, and each of them consists of several climatic and edaphic types.

However, being the most populous country on earth, the People's Republic of China faces special challenges with regard to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. With a population currently estimated at 1.2 billion for a land area of 9.6 million sq.km, the pressure on natural resources is tremendous. As a result, hundreds of species are highly endangered due particularly to loss of their habitats and over exploitation of some species. It is estimated that the number of endangered plant and animal species in China represents 20% of the total number of species recorded in the country. China is home to 156 of the 640 species listed in Appendix I of the CITES.

Deforestation, changes in land use, urbanization, unsustainable commercial exploitation of some species and inadequate technologies to offset the adverse impacts of rapid industrialization on the environment constitute the major threats to the rich biological diversity of China.

Aware of the importance of conserving its biological resources for sustainable development, China has embarked on a vast programme to ensure that protection of biodiversity is taken into account in the national environmental and sustainable development policies. In 1987, the Commission of Environment Protection of the State Council issued "**China Programme for Nature Conservation**" as the first strategic document on conservation in China outlining the overall strategy, fundamental principles and general response measures for the protection of biodiversity in the country. A **National Environmental Action Plan 1991-2000** was finalized in 1994 and has several sectoral chapters dealing with nature conservation issues. In 1994, "**China's Agenda 21 - a white paper on China's Population, Environment and Development in the 21st century**" was published to serve as a guide document for drawing up medium and long-term plans on economic and social development taking into account environmental protection as outlined in the Agenda 21 blue print adopted by Governments in Rio in June 1992.

¹ Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Zaire, Madagascar, China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia.

A **Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan** was completed in June 1994 with World Bank/UNDP/GEF assistance and a **Biodiversity Country Study** funded by UNEP/GEF, embodying a general diagnosis of the biodiversity situation prevailing in the country, is being finalized, to provide the baseline information needed for implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan.

A wide range of national institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, participated in the formulation of all of the above mentioned programmes which involved also international participation. The National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) is the central agency coordinating efforts of all other agencies and ministries whose activities touch on the environment.

II. Project Objectives and Short Description

Article 26 of the CBD states that Parties to the Convention are to submit national reports on measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties. Decision II/17 adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties requests all Parties to prepare their first national reports ready for consideration by the meeting of the COP in 1997. The decision stipulates that the first national report will focus on measures taken to implement Article 6 of the CBD (Decision II/7) and on the information contained in national biodiversity country studies.

The project is therefore aimed at assisting China to fulfil its obligations with respect to Article 26 of the CBD and Decision II/17. Since China has already several documents to constitute the basis of the first national report, the project will simply facilitate the process of integrating all relevant information into the first national report.

As the formulations of the **Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan**, **China's Agenda 21**, **the Biodiversity Country Study** and **the National Environmental Action Plan** were conducted in a broad participatory manner, NEPA wants to ensure that the preparation and particularly the adoption of the first national report also involve all major stakeholders. NEPA will prepare a draft report taking into account the guidance provided in Decision II/17 of COP 2. NEPA will then convene a workshop with government and NGOs representatives, to inform government agencies and the civil society of the objectives and requirements of the first national report and have their agreement on the contents of the national report. After this workshop, the First National Report will be finalized, translated, published and widely disseminated to representatives of all major stakeholders in China.

III Operational Criteria

Coverage without Duplication:

Since this is the first time that China will be preparing a report to the CBD in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention, there is no duplication. The report will draw on existing information of national programmes mentioned above.

Appropriate overall sequencing of activities

The project will be carried out according to the following time table. The report will be completed by September 1997 and will be submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention in the time frame decided by COP3.

Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6
Preparation of draft national report by NEPA	x	x	x			
National workshop to agree on content				x		
Finalization of the report based on the comments of the workshop				x	x	
Translation/Editing					x	
Publication, Promotion and Submission of the report to the CBD						x

Best practice

The report will be prepared taking into account the guide suggested in Decision II/17 of COP 2. Relevant guidance contained in the following documents will also be used: "Guide to Convention on Biological Diversity" (IUCN, 1994) and "National Biodiversity Planning: Guidelines based on early country experiences around the world" (WRI/UNEP/IUCN, 1995).

Deviations from Criteria and Norms

The cost of this project is slightly higher than the norms outlined in the GEF Operational Criteria for Biodiversity Enabling Activities due to the need expressed by the Chinese Government to have a participatory process for the adoption of the contents of the report and extensive dissemination of this report throughout the country. Given the complexity of the institutional framework in China and the importance that the Government attaches to involving all major relevant sectors in the fulfilling of its obligations under the CBD, it is imperative that the participatory approach and the promotion of the report be supported.

Institutional Framework and Project Implementation

NEPA will be the lead agency coordinating the execution of this project. It will hire national consultants, with a broad experience in the field of biodiversity conservation in China and a broad knowledge of all past and on-going activities of relevance to this project, who will prepare the draft report to be discussed in the national workshop. Key government ministries and agencies as well as non-governmental organisations that participated in other activities on which the first national report will be based, will be invited at the national workshop to discuss and approve the contents of the report. In particular, the following ministries and institutions will be represented: Ministry of Forestry; Ministry of Agriculture; the State Administration of Oceanography; the Ministry of Construction; the State Planning Commission; the Chinese Society of Environmental Sciences; the Chinese Ecological Society; the Chinese Society for Forestry; the Chinese Society of Agronomy; the Chinese Society of Botany; the Chinese Society of Zoology; the Chinese Association of Wildlife Conservation; the Chinese Academy of Sciences; the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens; the Chinese Association for Botanical Gardens.

Project Financing (US \$)

Activity	Product	Process	Total (US\$)
First National Report	35,000	20,000	55,000
- National consultants to prepare report	20,000	-	20,000
- National Workshop to approve the report		20,000	20,000
- Translation/Editing	5,000		5,000
- Publication/Dissemination	10,000		10,000
Coordination and Management (8%)	3,400	1,000	4,400
Total	38,400	21,000	59,400

Standard Activity Matrix

Enabling Activity	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
1. Stocktaking of Existing Information	CS ¹ EAP ² BCAP ³				1 2 3
2. Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD - strategies for conservation - strategies for sustainable use - strategies for benefit sharing	CS ¹ A 21 ⁴ BCAP ³ PNC ⁵ EAP ²				1 2 3 4 5
3. Planning and Preparation of NBSAP -national strategy -national action plan	BCAP ³				3
4. Preparation of the First National Report -First National Report	x		x	x	

x = activity to be undertaken under this project

1. China's Biodiversity: a Country Study (NEPA, June 1996 - draft)
2. China Environmental Protection Action Plan 1991-2000 (Beijing, May 1994)
3. China Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan (Beijing, May 1994)
4. China's Agenda 21: A white paper on China's population, environment and development in the 21st Century (Beijing, 1994)
5. China Programme for Nature Conservation (Beijing, 1987)